

Gossage's opening TMS to facilitate large-scale vaccine delivery, over 10,000 North Texans were immunized on multiple days at the Speedway's drive-through vaccine clinic.

Mr. Gossage's illustrious career has been punctuated by both commercial success and charitable service. I wish him all the best in his well-earned retirement and thank him for all he has done for our community and state.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MELISSA F. JAMES ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

**HON. FRANK D. LUCAS**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to take this opportunity to recognize Melissa F. James, who is retiring from the House of Representatives after 26 years of exemplary service.

Upon graduation from Oklahoma State University in 1994, Melissa relocated to Washington, D.C., to begin her career with the Honorable Tom Coburn, newly elected from her hometown in Oklahoma. Melissa's hard work, problem-solving skills, and can-do attitude quickly made her a valued member of Congressman Coburn's staff. After starting as a staff assistant, Melissa eventually was promoted to be Congressman Coburn's scheduler, a position she held until Mr. Coburn retired from the House in 2001.

Melissa remained in the House, next serving for 10 years as the scheduler and office manager to Congressman Todd Tiahrt of Kansas. In 2011, after Mr. Tiahrt's departure from Congress, Melissa joined the office of Congressman Randy Neugebauer of Texas. In her time with Mr. Neugebauer, Melissa frequently displayed a deft touch with difficult questions from both other staff and constituents. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a finer office representative than Melissa, who embodies the true spirit of public service. Melissa proved herself to be an irreplaceable member of every team on which she served, as demonstrated by the fact that she never left a Member's staff until the Member left the House.

After Congressman Neugebauer's retirement from the House in 2017, Melissa joined the Office of General Counsel (OGC) as its administrative director. Melissa took on new tasks and responsibilities with aplomb and immediately became an indispensable part of the OGC team. It would be impossible to list all of her contributions, but among them, she has taken a lead role with regard to all aspects of office management and administration, including with the office budget and computer systems. During her time with OGC, Melissa demonstrated herself to be dedicated to serving Members, Officers, and employees of the House, remarkably trustworthy and utterly fearless when faced with novel, sensitive, and difficult matters. Melissa's unwavering resolve and commitment to the House and OGC was always evident, as was her ability to find a solution to seemingly any problem.

Beyond her incredible dedication to her work, Melissa has been a kind and thoughtful coworker to all, treating everyone from the Members to the mail-carriers with the utmost respect and kindness. As scores of current

and former colleagues can attest, Melissa is a true joy to work with, and is someone who makes the workday better for everyone with whom she comes into contact. It is no exaggeration to say that she has become family to many over her years on the Hill. Melissa is always eager to share her passion and contagious enthusiasm for golf—and really any sport in which an alum of her cherished OSU Cowboys (Go Pokes) plays—so much so that anyone who knows her soon becomes a fan as well. Melissa's cheerful and welcoming presence on the Hill will be sorely missed by all those who had the pleasure of working with her.

It will be hard to imagine the House without Melissa. Every day for the past 26 years, Melissa has served the House with unmatched dedication and tenacity. Regardless of the task before her, Melissa will always find a way to accomplish it—a quality that will continue to serve her well in her future endeavors. On behalf of the Office of General Counsel and the entire House community, I thank Melissa for her decades of service and wish for her a joyous and relaxing retirement among her many friends and family in Oklahoma.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JAMES ALKIRE

**HON. MARK DeSAULNIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of James "Jim" Alkire.

Jim was born in West Virginia in 1934. When he was 10 years old, Jim's family relocated to Arizona where he spent the rest of his childhood and attended the University of Arizona. In 1957, he was drafted into the United States Army and served two years of stateside duty. Jim then returned to his education and graduated from Texas Western College. From there, he obtained a master's degree in public administration from the University of Pennsylvania.

After completing his education, Jim pursued a career in public service. He served as the director of finance and assistant to the city manager in Highland Park, Illinois, and then the city manager of Centralia, Illinois. In 1970, Jim and his family made a final move to Pleasant Hill, California, where he served as the city manager until retiring in 1987. Jim is remembered as an outstanding leader who fostered positive working environments.

In his personal life, Jim married his wife, Margaret, in 1960, and the couple had three children. Jim was a long-time Rotarian in Illinois and California and joined the Pleasant Hill Rotary Club in 1970, where he participated in many years of invaluable community service. Jim was also an emeritus member of the Pleasant Hill Community Foundation and active member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. He coached baseball for his sons, listened to jazz music, and was known for his sense of humor. In retirement, Jim and Margaret traveled the world together.

Sadly, Jim passed away in April of this year. Please join me in honoring Jim for his leadership and many contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING STATE SENATOR JIM BEALL OF CALIFORNIA

**HON. NORMA J. TORRES**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend, California State Senator Jim Beall. After more than 40 years of dedicated public service to Santa Clara County, Jim recently retired at the end of his term.

As a Santa Clara County native, Jim spent his formative years in San Jose as one of ten children. He lived in a home where money was tight and worked in the crop fields as a teenager, learning the values of a hard day's work, self-reliance, and giving back to his community. Jim put his passion for public service to work at the age of 24 when he served on the San Jose City Planning Commission, and at age 28, he became the youngest person ever elected to the San Jose City Council. As a council member, Jim worked to fix and update the county's infrastructure and expand affordable housing. His role in creating San Jose's Housing Department was key to the development and growth of the city he loved serving. Jim's efforts to bring new and updated access to the San Jose Community as chair of the Santa Clara County Traffic Authority led him to be the first in California to successfully pass a half-cent sales tax increase to raise funds to help build Highways 85, 101, and 237. Later as a member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Jim followed through on his commitment to increasing access to healthcare and mental health services and worked with his colleagues to pass the Children's Health Initiative, which ensured every child in the county had health insurance.

Jim continued his public service as a member of both the California State Assembly and California State Senate. Jim passed major infrastructure bills including SB1, one of the largest infrastructure bills in California's history which created over 150,000 new jobs and repaired and updated roads, and SB 595 which supported regional transportation projects in the San Francisco Bay Area. He also worked on a number of public safety bills including passing Audrie's Law, a bill that empowered survivors of sexual assault by reforming juvenile sexual assault statutes. As a lifelong advocate for foster youth, Jim authored first-in-the-nation legislation to extend foster youth benefits to more young people and passed college access bills that have led to higher graduation rates of foster youth. Jim also championed the cause to improve mental health treatment by authoring several bills that increased access to such services and played a critical role in ensuring California healthcare plans included mental health and substance abuse disorder treatment. Through his final term in the California State Senate that ended in December 2020, Jim has worked tirelessly and selflessly for his community and the list of his legislative accomplishments goes on and on.

I was lucky to serve with Jim in both the California State Assembly and in the State Senate. I was always impressed by his thoughtfulness and dedication to improving his community and state. As he moves on to a

new phase of his career, I am pleased to recognize his incredible work for the Golden State.

For his remarkable accomplishments, it is my honor to recognize Jim Beall. His decades of commitment and contributions to the City of San Jose, Santa Clara County, and the State of California are worthy of commendation and admiration.

#### RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF MRS. KAREN SCHUETT

**HON. DAVID G. VALADAO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mr. VALADAO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career of Mrs. Karen Schuett and her retirement from teaching.

Mrs. Schuett began her career at Horace Mann Elementary School in the Bakersfield City School District in 1983, before teaching in the Panama Buena Vista Unified School District at Stockdale Elementary School in 1984. For the remainder of her career, she taught primarily 2nd and 3rd grades at Castle, Sandrini, Laurelglen, and Hart Schools. In addition, as part of the Sister City Program, Mrs. Schuett taught English as a Second Language at Wakayama Municipal High School in Wakayama, Japan, from 1988 to 1989.

During her career, Mrs. Schuett served numerous committees and held various leadership positions in efforts to ensure the best possible education for her students and the entire community. She also was awarded several recognitions, including 1992 Teacher of the Year, the California Teachers Association State WHO Award for 2009–2010, and the California Teachers Association Member-in-Politics Ted Bass Award.

Two of Mrs. Schuett's proudest professional accomplishments are restoring the Christmas lights on Truxtun Avenue as part of a class project, which was nominated by the Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce for a Beautiful Bakersfield Award, and founding the Boys of Color mentoring program. The Boys of Color program was started in 2003 to bring community members to the school site to mentor young Black students. The program has grown to 50 participants and has been recognized by the Kern County Martin Luther King, Jr. Committee, the NAACP, the California Teachers Association, and the California legislature.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the career of Mrs. Karen Schuett and wishing her the best in retirement.

#### RECOGNIZING CAT DAVIS

**HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Madam Speaker, my heart is heavy as I rise today to honor the life of my dear friend, Cat Davis, who passed away on May 26, 2021. Cat was a remarkable soul, and she was one of God's greatest gifts to everyone who knew her. My prayers are with Cat's family as we mourn her passing.

I first met Cat and her mom, Sally, at a unity dinner that I hosted several years ago in Spokane, Washington. Cat had bright purple hair that caught everyone's attention. When she first approached me, she gave me a big hug, and I knew right away that her stand out hair color was the perfect match for the clear vibrancy she had for life.

In that moment, not I, nor anyone else could have imagined the depth of suffering she had been enduring. Under the surface, Cat was fighting for her life as she battled Scleroderma, a rare autoimmune disease without a cure. During our first meeting, Cat told me she needed a stem cell transplant, but Medicare refused to cover the surgery. This would have devastated most people, but not Cat. Instead, her will to live and her desire to fight this illness only grew stronger.

In June 2017, Cat and Sally travelled to D.C. to meet with the Director for the Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services in my office in the Capitol. Cat passionately shared her story and pleaded for them to grant the transplant surgery, and they responded positively. It had been worth the difficult trip from Spokane to D.C.

Cat would eventually be granted approval for surgery, and with it, a second lease on life. I watched as Cat continued to approach each day with hope, enthusiasm, and deep understanding of the impact a life lived for others has. As our friendship continued to deepen over the years, she and her mom became a special example to me of love enduring all things.

As the Bible says in I Corinthians, "Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love." Cat's love and friendship will forever be imprinted on my heart, and for that, I will always be grateful.

Madam Speaker, Cat Davis lived an amazing life that deserves to be celebrated. In honor of Cat's love, legacy, and passion that has inspired all those who knew her, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Cat Davis. May God grant her eternal peace in His kingdom.

#### HONORING SGT. NICK ERNSTES

**HON. GREG PENCE**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the heroic actions of Sgt. Nick Ernstes of the Hancock County Sheriff's Department.

While off-duty, Sgt. Ernstes saved the life of a woman who had been stabbed repeatedly in the parking lot of a local convenience store.

After arriving on the scene, Sgt. Ernstes acted quickly and applied the proper medical attention that likely prevented the woman from losing her life.

Thank God for Sgt. Nick Ernstes for his heroic actions and for serving our community. And I thank every member of law enforcement for bravely fulfilling their mission to protect and serve.

#### RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF THOMAS RAY POWELL

**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Thomas Ray Powell of Ypsilanti, Michigan. His lifetime of public service is worthy of commendation.

Mr. Powell was born on November 9, 1949, in Stamford, Texas, to Lantz Powell and Mary Falcon. He spent his childhood in numerous states before attending the University of Missouri—Kansas City. Upon his graduation, Mr. Powell entered the United States Army as a medical laboratory technician, stationed at Tripler Hospital in Hawaii. He married Ms. Marianne Parizek on December 30, 1971, and together they had two children, Megan and Benjamin. Mr. Powell received a master's degree in Health Services Administration in 1980 and worked in hospitals all around the country, including the VA Hospital in Kansas City, Truman Medical Center, Davenport Medical Center, Baker Hospital, and the Roper St. Francis Health System.

In 2001, Mr. Powell decided to pursue his lifelong dream of teaching high school science. A year later, he received his teaching certificate and taught biology, chemistry, environmental science, and forensic science at Woodland High School and Summerville High School in Charleston, South Carolina. After retiring and moving to Ypsilanti in 2015 to be closer to his family, Mr. Powell served as a long-term science substitute at Saline High School.

Mr. Powell is beloved by his former students and family. No matter where he goes, Mr. Powell has been active in his community, serving as the president of the North Charleston Breakfast Rotary Club and as a trusted mentor to countless high schoolers.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Thomas Ray Powell. He has supported so many throughout his life, and all who know him can attest to his caring personality. I join with Mr. Powell's wife, Marianne; two children, Megan and Benjamin; granddaughter, Nora; former students; family; and friends in extending my thanks to him for his lifelong dedication to public service.

#### TRIBUTE TO IKE BOOTSMA

**HON. KEN CALVERT**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Eastvale City Council Member Ike Bootsma, who passed away on Friday, May 14, 2021. Ike was a dedicated leader in our Riverside County community and he will be deeply missed.

Ike was one of nine children born to Trynje and Jim Bootsma, his Dutch immigrant parents who were among the first families to establish a dairy in Chino Valley in the late 1930s. Following in the agricultural and entrepreneurial footsteps of his parents, Ike started his own calf ranch in 1975. As the area began to grow and local dairy farms began to make